

Paris Summit. At the Ottawa Summit, in 1981, the particular focus on relations between developed and developing countries contributed towards the preparation of the North-South Summit in Cancun. With the growing importance placed on the environment since the Toronto Summit of 1988, priority has been given to linking economic development and environmental protection.

## **Canada and the Economic Summits**

In a world characterized by increasing interdependence and by the globalization of markets for goods, services and capital, Canada is especially sensitive to the decisions and initiatives of the other leading industrialized countries. Economic summits give it a unique opportunity to defend and promote its political and economic interests.

Since the topics discussed by the summit leaders are elevated to international attention, the summit process enables Canada to have a direct influence on the international agenda as well as the policies of the G-7 countries. Thus, since 1976, Canada played a leading role in advancing such issues as trade, environment, human rights (including apartheid in South Africa), narcotics, East-West relations and relations with the developing countries.

### **Liberalization of trade**

Summit leaders regularly discuss matters related to the further liberalization of trade and market-oriented trade practices. Canada, with its partners, is attempting to end protectionism and trade-distorting measures.

At the 1986 Tokyo Summit, on the initiative of Canada and with the strong support of the United States, the leaders expressed for the first time their concern over the subsidy practices and protectionist measures that are distorting world agricultural markets. As a result, agriculture became one of the main issues of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, launched in September 1986. Though the problem has yet to be solved, real progress toward a solution has been achieved.

### **Environment**

Canada has always worked to ensure that the environment occupies a prominent posi-

tion on summit agendas. Some of its concerns include the depletion of the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect, acid rain and marine pollution.

At the 1988 Toronto Summit, Canada spoke out strongly for the principle of sustainable development and saw it endorsed by all participants a year later at the 1989 Summit of the Arch in Paris. This endorsement added considerable impetus to the concept: it was adopted at the Dakar Francophone Summit (1989), at the Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of State and Government (Kuala Lumpur, 1989), at the OECD Ministerial Meeting of 1990, and at the Environmental Conferences of The Hague and Bergen (1989 and 1990). A number of Western countries, including Canada, the U.K. and the Netherlands, have since announced environmental plans based on the principle of sustainable development.

In the interests of sustainable development, Canada invited the Paris Summit participants, the international agencies, in particular the OECD, and other countries to work toward developing new environmental indicators that would make it possible to accurately depict environmental conditions and to take into account the impact of economic policies and industrial and trade decisions on the environment.

A preliminary set of indicators was unveiled on the eve of the OECD Conference of Environment Ministers in January 1991. Last fall, an OECD working group published a report on the use of economic instruments in preparing environmental policies.

The OECD is continuing its work in this field, paying special attention to the practical aspects of certain questions, for example, climatic change and packaging. Another expert group studies how natural resource prices are set in order to ensure that the real cost of resource depletion is reflected.

Two Canadian initiatives received the support of participants at the 1990 Houston Summit. First, the leaders agreed on the need for a strategy to combat land-based marine pollution. An initial conference of experts in Halifax in May 1991 brought the problem to the attention of the international community and promoted a global approach for the protection of the ocean environment. The experts will meet again before the end of 1991 to prepare a declaration and an ac-